Amendments to the Claims:

What is claimed is:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A method for ~~measuring potential tumorigenicity of~~ assaying mammalian cells to determine if tumor cells are present, comprising:

a. providing a sample of medium surrounding said mammalian cells, and

b. detecting the presence of a 120-130kD fragment of α-dystroglycan in the medium, ~~said fragment having an Mr of 120-130kD,~~ whereby the presence of the fragment indicates that tumor cells are present ~~higher potential tumorigenicity~~.

Claim 2 (Currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein said detecting comprises:

a. adding to said sample a material selected from the group consisting of a monoclonal antibody to α-dystroglycan ~~and laminin~~, and

b. measuring that the size of the α-dystroglycan fragment is 120-130kD ~~detected~~.

Claim 3 (Currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein said mammalian cells are human mammary epithelial cells.

Claim 4 (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein said medium is blood serum.

Claim 5 (Currently amended): A method for measuring ~~potential~~ tumorigenicity of cells, comprising:

a. providing a sample of said cells, ~~and~~

b. detecting the presence of α-dystroglycan on the surface of said cells,

c. providing a normal value for α-dystroglycan expression levels on cell surfaces; and

d. comparing the detection levels of α-dystroglycan to said normal value, whereby ~~the absence~~ a decrease in levels of α-dystroglycan on said cells of the sample indicates a higher potential for tumorigenicity.

Claim 6 (Currently amended): The method of claim 5, wherein said detecting comprises:

a. adding to said sample a monoclonal antibody specific for ~~to~~ α-dystroglycan, and

b. measuring the amount of labeled α-dystroglycan detected.

Claim 7 (Original): The method of claim 5, wherein said cells are human mammary epithelial cells.

Claim 8 (Currently amended): The method of claim 5, wherein the step of providing a normal value comprises measuring ~~said detecting comprises measurement of the amount of α-dystroglycan relative to~~ the amount of β-dystroglycan on the surface of said cells, wherein a relative decrease in the ratio of α-dystroglycan to β-dystroglycan indicates α-dystroglycan shedding and higher potential tumorigenicity.

Claims 9 – 21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (Currently amended): A method of determining the likelihood that a patient has a tumor, by assaying proteolysed α-dystroglycan fragments ~~shed from a cell into blood~~ in patient serum, said method comprising the steps of:

a. contacting a serum sample to be assayed with a labeled antibody specific for ~~an~~ α-dystroglycan ~~fragment~~, and

b. assaying the amount of bound label,

whereby ~~wherein~~ said α-dystroglycan ~~fragments~~ bound to said labeled antibody ~~are~~ is positively correlated with existence of a tumor ~~cell growth~~ in the patient.

Claim 23 (Currently amended): The method of Claim 22, wherein the α-dystroglycan ~~fragment~~ is ~~an~~ a fragment of approximately 120 kD fragment.

Claim 24 (Currently amended): The method of Claim 22, wherein the α-dystroglycan ~~fragment~~ is ~~an~~ a fragment of approximately 60 kD fragment.

Claims 25 – 28 (Canceled).

Claim 29 (Currently amended): The method of claim 22, wherein said tumor cell is an epithelial cell tumor.

Claim 30 (Currently amended): The method of claim 29, wherein said epithelial cell tumor is a breast epithelial cell tumor.